

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action, the Examiner has set forth a restriction requirement contending that the application contains claims directed to the following groups of inventions:

Group I: claims 17-23, drawn to a projection exposure apparatus and extracting gas bubbles from liquid;

Group II: claim 24, drawn to a projection exposure apparatus and an immersion device introducing a flushing liquid different from the immersion liquid; and,

Group III claims 25 and 26, drawn to a projection exposure apparatus and a method and moving the support for the photosensitive surface and forming a wedge-shaped immersion space.

Furthermore, the Examiner contends that the application contains claims directed to more than one species, which lack unity of invention because they are not so linked to form a single general inventive concept; most notably:

Species I: claims 17-19 and 21-23, drawn to extracting gas bubbles with a suction nozzle or a degasser; and,

Species II: claim 20 drawn to removing gas bubbles with an ultrasound source and inducing oscillations.

Finally, the Examiner has indicated that no claim in its current form is generic.

Applicant respectfully elects Group II, claim 24, without traverse.

By this reply, claims 17-23 and 25-26 are withdrawn. New claim 27—which Applicant believes is directed to elected Group II—has been added and is dependent on elected claim 24. Thus, claims 17-27 are pending in this application.

Added Claims

Newly added claim 27 is fully supported by the originally filed application, most notably at paragraph [0025], second sentence, of the published application.

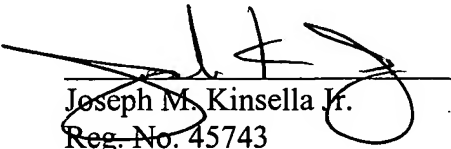
CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicant has provisionally elected Claims 24 and 27, directed to Group II of the restriction requirement.

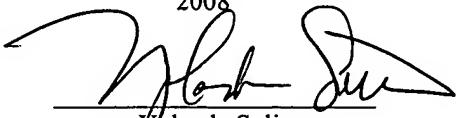
Applicant has included a petition for a one-month extension of time to respond to the action and the accompanying payment for the fee associated therewith, and believes that no other fees are due. Should any further charges or fees in connection with this Reply be required however, the Commissioner is herein authorized to debit such amount from Applicant's Deposit Account No. 50-0545.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: September 26, 2008



Joseph M. Kinsella Jr.
Reg. No. 45743
One of Applicant's Attorneys
(312) 226-1818

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING
<p>I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope Addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on September 26, 2008</p>  <p>Yolanda Solis</p>